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FM AMEMBASSY CARACAS  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2910  
INFO RUEHBO/AMEMBASSY BOGOTA PRIORITY 5895  
RUEHBR/AMEMBASSY BRASILIA PRIORITY 5105  
RUEHLP/AMEMBASSY LA PAZ PRIORITY 1576  
RUEHPE/AMEMBASSY LIMA PRIORITY 9778  
RUEHQI/AMEMBASSY QUITO PRIORITY 1648  
RUEHBS/AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS PRIORITY 0349  
RUEHLI/AMEMBASSY LISBON PRIORITY 1274  
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY 0394  
RUEHMD/AMEMBASSY MADRID PRIORITY 3005  
RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS PRIORITY 0298  
RUEHRO/AMEMBASSY ROME PRIORITY 0530  
RUEHTC/AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE PRIORITY 0767  
RUEHME/AMEMBASSY MEXICO PRIORITY 3523  
RUEHOT/AMEMBASSY OTTAWA PRIORITY 0523  
RUEHBU/AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES PRIORITY 0967  
RUEHSG/AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO PRIORITY 3218  
RUEHAO/AMCONSUL CURACAO PRIORITY 0539  
RUEHMI/USOFFICE FRC FT LAUDERDALE PRIORITY 2775  
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC PRIORITY  
RUMIAAA/HQ USSOUTHCOM MIAMI FL PRIORITY  
RUEHUB/USINT HAVANA PRIORITY 0416

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 CARACAS 000211

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HQSOUTHCOM ALSO FOR POLAD  
FOR FRC LAMBERT

E.O. 12958: DECL: 01/21/2021

TAGS: PGOV MASS VE

SUBJECT: US SUPPORT REQUESTED FOR VENEZUELAN DISASTER  
MANAGEMENT

CARACAS 00000211 001.2 OF 002

Classified By: POLITICAL COUNSELOR ROBERT R. DOWNES FOR 1.4 (D)

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ALL POSTS PLEASE ZFR CARACAS 00211 .

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TRANSMITTED.

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CARACAS 00000211 002 OF 002

-- The offer would reinforce Post's public diplomacy. US public statements cannot counter all of the President Hugo Chavez' outrageous accusations against the United States. USG assistance in facilitating Venezuela's response to emergencies, however, would help undercut Chavez' repeated claims that the USG is plotting to invade Venezuela.

¶4. (C) The risks of funding such a project are minimal. Although PC falls institutionally under the interior ministry, the equipment to be provided would be of little use for monitoring the domestic opposition. According to PC's proposal, the operations center is requesting projectors, screens, digital chalkboards, audio-visual equipment, computers, and computer accessories. Luis Diaz, an anti-Chavez PC deputy director, told poloff January 12 that

the equipment could not be used for nefarious ends and stressed its importance for monitoring highway crashes and other incidents in real time.

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We Win If They Refuse  
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15. (C) Given its record, the GOV may refuse the assistance. Not only did the GOV refuse U.S. help in the Vargas disaster, but it also failed to respond to requests for U.S. Air Force WC-130 aircraft to track hurricanes over Venezuelan airspace in 2005. An ardent Chavez supporter, PC national director Rivero has been communicating with MILGROUP through intermediaries, presumably so he can avoid association with U.S. officials.

16. (C) A refusal, however, would play to Washington's advantage. The GOV would appear to be frustrating disaster recovery efforts as its own efforts are exposed as insufficient. The USG would appear to be only trying to help.

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Comment  
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17. (C) Again, this is a win-win proposal for the U.S. Government. Post's public affairs section could publicize the assistance with some fanfare. It could also easily leak any GOV refusal.

BROWNFIELD